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BOROUGH OF SALTASH

Annual Report

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR 1947

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BOROUGH OF SALTASH.

Report of the Medical Officer of Health
for the year 1947.

Mr. Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors,

I beg to submit my report for the year 1947, incorporating certain vital statistics for 1946, for which year it was not possible to issue a report owing to the untimely death of Dr. H. G. Robinson, who has been so much missed as Medical Officer of Health and as a much loved local practitioner.

SECTION A. SOCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND STATISTICS.

Area in acres, 6,257. Population (Registrar General's Estimate) 7,200, in 1946; 7,287 in 1947.

The Borough consists of a residential area, with Saltash, St. Stephens and Burraton as a built-up area, and an agricultural area consisting of Forder, Trematon, Trehan and Carkeel. together with several outlying farms.

Employment is provided for a number of men in two quarries, and several men and women are employed in the Creameries in Saltash. A comparatively large proportion of the population is employed in the Government Establishments at Ernesettle, Bull Point, and His Majesty's Dockyard. An increasing amount of employment is likely to be afforded by the new and growing factories built, and being built, in the Ernesettle district. Considerable seasonal activity in local orchards, market gardens, etc., affords part-time employment for a number of women as well as men.

VITAL STATISTICS. Corrected by inward and outward Transfer.

BIRTHS.

	1946.			1947.		
	Total	M.	F.	Total	M.	F.
Live Births—Legitimate	137	72	65	167	90	77
Illegitimate	10	5	5	9	6	3
Still Births—Legitimate	6	4	2	4	1	3
Illegitimate	1	1	0	0	0	0

	1946.	1947.
Live Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated population	20.0	24.13
Rate for England and Wales	19.1	20.5
Still Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated population	0.97	0.55
Rate for England and Wales	0.53	0.50

DEATHS.

	1946.	1947.
Total number corrected by transfer	89.00	100.00
Death Rate per 1,000 estimated population	12.36	13.72
Death Rate for England and Wales	11.50	12.00

INFANTILE DEATHS.

Total number under 1 year	7.00	7.00
Rate per 1,000 Live Births	47.62	39.77
Rate for England and Wales	43.00	41.00

SECTION B.

During this year changes have taken place on the staff of the Sanitary Department. A report was made in 1946 by the Acting Medical Officer of Health that the combined work of Sanitary Inspector and Borough Surveyor was more than one man could do efficiently. Mr. Drabble, who combined these two offices, has left us, and in his place we have welcomed Mr. E. N. SMYTHE as Sanitary Inspector, and Mr. A. de BARR, of Plymouth has been appointed Borough Surveyor.

Bacteriological work has, as in previous years, been sent either to Dr. Worldey, at the Prince of Wales' Hopital, Greenbank Road, Plymouth, or to Dr. Hocking, the Cornwall County Pathologist, the Royal Cornwall Infirmary, Truro. The Ambulance Service run by the St. John Ambulance Association, Saltash Division has continued to prove a great blessing to the District, and has worked most efficiently.

INFANT WELFARE CLINIC.

Thanks to the voluntary efforts of the ladies of the Child Welfare Committee and of the Nurses and County Health Visitor for the Area, the Infant Welfare Clinic has continued to do very good work. During the year, 599 attendances were made, and a doctor was in attendance on 23 occasions. Thanks are also due to the Borough Council, who have waived any charge for the use of the rooms used for this purpose. Financially, the Clinic is self-supporting, deriving its income from the profits on the sale of Virol and teas to those attending

NURSING HOME.

There is one Nursing Home in the District, which is licensed and supervised by the County Council.

HOSPITAL SERVICES.

Much useful work has continued to be done by St. Barnabas Hospital in spite of increasing staffing difficulties. The thanks of the Community are due to the Nursing Staff in general, and to the Sisters in particular, without whose perseverance and devotion to duty in most difficult times the Hospital would have had to close down. During this year the Hospital has benefited greatly by the acquisition of a new and up-to-date anaesthetic apparatus, bought with the proceeds of Public Subscription as a memorial to the late Dr. Robinson. It would be difficult to think of a more useful or fitting memorial. Other cases are dealt with also in the Plymouth Hospitals.

The following Sections, C., D., and E., embrace the report of the Sanitary Inspector.

SECTION C. WATER SUPPLY.

WATER. Bulk supply of water is taken from Plymouth Corporation, via the Royal Albert Bridge, at the rate of approximately 29,000 gallons per day, and also from the South-East Cornwall Water Board, via Hatt, at the rate of 5,000 gallons per day. The quality is satisfactory but the pressure is only just adequate for present requirements and there is little margin in this respect. It will be necessary for the Council to consider further scraping and possibly the renewal of certain old trunk mains, which, owing to the corrosive nature of the water, are undoubtedly in a bad condition.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL AND SEWERAGE. Messrs. George Ivory and Partners, Consulting Civil Engineers, of Plymouth, have been commissioned by the Council to prepare a comprehensive report on the sewage disposal of the town. Pending the receipt of this report no action has been taken during the year for the improvement of the drainage system of the Town.

REFUSE COLLECTION. The collection of household refuse by direct labour, using a properly constructed motor refuse vehicle, has continued throughout the year satisfactorily. The refuse is tipped at Salt Mill Marsh. Owing to legal and administrative complications the purchase of Salt Mill Tip has not yet been completed. Meanwhile the Council are unable to enforce proper control tipping, and an unsatisfactory state exists at Salt Mill. It is anticipated that the purchase will be completed during 1948, when the Borough Surveyor will become responsible for, and control the method of tipping at Salt Mill Marsh.

RIVERS AND STREAMS. Samples of water taken at intervals from the River Tamar have revealed pollution of water adjacent to the foreshore. Periodical inspections are made to prevent any pollution, etc., of rivers and streams in the area, and action taken where necessary.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION .No conversions from dry conservancy to water carriage system have been made during the year.

PUBLIC CLEANSING. Refuse collection has been referred to above. Where cesspools which require cleansing are found, arrangements are made to hire a mechanical cess pool emptier, which is paid for proportionately by the owners concerned.

SANITARY INSPECTIONS OF THE AREA,	Cowsheds and Dairies	6
	Bakehouses, Shops, and work places	33
	Refuse Bins	23
	Infectious Disease, disinfections	NIL
	Ice Cream premises	8
	Public Conveniences	3
	Disinfestations	9
	W.C's., Drains, Testing, etc., ...	99
DEFECTS FOUND AND REMEDIED AFTER NOTICE.	Formal Notice	8
	Informal Notice	36

SHOPS. Inspections have been made during the year and one defect relating to sanitary conveniences found and remedied after informal notice.

SMOKE ABATEMENT. No nuisance from smoke, as this is mainly a residential area, with no large industrial concerns which would give rise to industrial smoke nuisance.

CAMPING SITES. There is one camping site in the area for which a licence has been issued by the Local Authority in accordance with Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936. This site is regularly inspected to prevent any nuisance being caused by the campers or owner of the site. Additional sanitary accommodation has been provided during the year for the campers.

SEA-WATER SWIMMING BATH. The bath has been closed as a result of the polluted condition of the water of the River Tamar, by which the bath is filled.

ERADICATION OF BED BUGS. No action was found to be necessary during the year.

SCHOOLS. The sanitary arrangements of the schools have been examined, and in one case where trough closets are in existence, action has been taken to have individual water closets installed, and in another instance additional water closets have been found neccessary for the number of pupils attending the school, and these have been provided.

SECTION D. HOUSING.

Building has continued throughout the year on the New Warfelton Estate, of the programme for 12 Flats and 111 three bed-roomed houses on this site. By the end of 1947, 12 Flats and 59 Houses had been completed. A start has also been made during the year on the Layout of the Cowdray Estate, which is to accommodate approximately 31 houses.

INSPECTION OF HOUSES DURING THE YEAR.

(a)	Total number of house inspected for housing defects (under the Public Health Act and Housing Acts.)	182
(b)	Number of inspections made for that purpose	190
(c)	Number included under sub head (a) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations 1925	29
(d)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	30
(e)	Number found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for habitation	1
(f)	Number (exclusive of those referred to in preceeding paragraph) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	Nil.

REMEDY OF DEFECTS DURING YEAR WITHOUT FORMAL NOTICE.

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal notice by Local Authority or their Officers 11

ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS DURING THE YEAR.

A—Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of Housing Act, 1936.

(i). Number in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied 1

(ii). Number rendered fit after service of formal notice

By owners 1

By Local Authority—in default of owners Nil.

B—Proceedings under Public Health Act.

(i). Number in respect of which informal notices were served requiring defects to be remedied 42

(ii). Number in which defects were remedied after service of formal notice

By owners 19

By Local Authority—in default of owners Nil.

C.—Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of Housing Act, 1936

(i). Numbers in respect of which demolition orders were made 1

(ii). Numbers demolished in respect of demolition orders .... Nil.

D.—Proceedings under Section 12 of Housing Act, 1936

(i). Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which closing orders were made 1

(ii). Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which closing orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit 1

HOUSING ACT, 1936 Overcrowding. There were no new cases of overcrowding reported to the Sanitary Inspector during the year.

SECTION E.—INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

A regular check of milk samples taken at Daw's Creamery is undertaken and reports are satisfactory.

A regular inspection of farms and milk producers is not carried out as the Sanitary Committee do not think there is any necessity, and leaves it to the Cornwall Agricultural Executive Committee Inspectors.

There are no slaughter houses in operation in the Borough. All slaughter of animals is carried out at the Ministry of Food Central Slaughter House in Launceston, and routine inspections made of the carcases by lay inspectors.

Routine inspection of all food preparing and retail food shops, including butcher shops, is carried out with regard to cleanliness and hygiene.

SECTION F. PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

There was comparatively little infectious disease during the year, the rate per one thousand comparing favourably with the rate for England and Wales, except in the case of pneumonia, which showed a steep rise

One case of diphtheria was notified but the diagnosis was disproved, so that no case of diphtheria occurred within the Borough during the year. Further progress was made with immunisation, 183 children receiving primary injections and 238 re-inforcing doses.

Table showing Age and Incidence of Infectious Disease among Civilians.

Age	Measles		Whooping Cough		Scarlet Fever		Age	Pneumonia	
	M	F	M	F	M	F		M	F
Under 1	1	1					0—5		1
1—3	6	5	3	2			5—15	1	4
3—5	10	11	2	3			15—45	4	4
5—10	14	13		3	3	2	45—65	6	
10—15	1	3	1	1			65 & over	6	1
15—25		3				1			
25 & over		2				1	Totals	17	10
Totals	32	38	6	9	3	4			

The rate of infectious disease notification is as follows:—

Measles—per 1000 civilian population	9.75	England and Wales	9.41
Whooping Cough— do.	2.05	England and Wales	2.22
Scarlet Fever— do.	0.975	England and Wales	1.37
Pneumonia— do.	5.21	England and Wales	0.79

PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS. During the year 9 new cases of tuberculosis of the lung were notified, 4 of which occurred in non-civilians. There were 4 deaths from this cause during the same period. Two cases were notified of tuberculosis occurring elsewhere than in the lungs.

VENEREAL DISEASE. There has been no evidence of increase in this district.

I should like to take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to Mr. Smythe and the staff for all their assistance, and for the able way in which they have carried out their duties.

Your obedient servant,

T. G. CLARKE,
Medical Officer of Health.